The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.

VOL. XXI BOSTON, NOVEMBER 25, 1871. NO. 30.

For the Myrtle,

The Lesson of the Flowers.

MAMMA, just look at my garden,
My beautiful flowers are dead;
There's only one little pansy,
That's able to hold up its head.

Jack Frost has paid them a visit,
And the winds in frolicsome mood,
With leaves have covered them over
As did robins the babes in the wood.

My child, the flowers you cherish,
Are emblems of life and decay;
Like them you flourish in beauty,
Like them you'll soon pass away.

Mamma, I know in the spring-time,
They'll bud and blossom again;
They live through the night of the winter,
They flourish in sunshine aud rain.

But we never see people returning,
From darkness and silence and gloom.
Oh mamma! the grave is so dreadful,
Away from our bright, happy home.

But darling, remember his promise,
Whose love is both boundless and sure;
For we his dear children inherit
A life that's immortal and pure.

And when our frail bodies shall perish,
We'll go where Jesus has gone,
Where life, love, and joy are immortal,
And winter and death are unknown.

A. S. T.

For the Myrtle.

Look Up.

Should dark clouds of sorrow lower,
Shadowed all your pathway be,
Still look up and still press onward,
Brightness in the future see.
He by whom each hair is numbered,
He who notes each sparrow's fall,
He is watching o'er his children,
Guarding, guiding one and all.

H. H. D.

For the Myrtle.

The Thanksgiving Chickens.

HOW little do children in the city know of the delights of those in the country. Tommy and Dassie live away up country in a little old farmhouse. There are high hills all around their home, so high that it seems to the children if they could only go to the top of one of them, they could look right into heaven and see the angels. But they had happy times together, these children. There are plenty of wild flowers growing on the hills, which they gather in the long spring and summer days, and in the autumn they bring home armfuls of bright colored leaves and berries. In the winter they are always covered with snow, and, although the children can no longer play on them, they like to look at them, and think them more beautiful at this time than at any other.

They have a great many pets, too. There are the six little pigs, with funny curled up tails, which Tommy and Dassie think are splendid. Then there are the cows, and the old horse, Dick, and more hens and chickens than they can count.

But Tommy and Dassie liked best of all, a little yellow hen, that they brought up themselves from a wee chicken. This little hen was the only one that had lived out of a brood of

twelve, and I doubt if this one had lived, for the old mother hen did not seem to care anything about it, but Tommy brought it into the house, and he and Dassie fed it and cared for it tenderly, until it grew to be a fine, large chicken, and could go about in the yard with the others. And they think it is the prettiest little hen in the whole yard.

It was nearing Thanksgiving time, and of course some of the hens must be killed for the Thanksgiving dinner, and there must be a larger number than usual killed this time, for grandma and grandpa were to have a golden wedding, and all Tommy's and Dassie's uncles and aunts and little cousins were coming from far away to the old farmhouse.

Tommy and Dassie always feed the chickens. They have a great pan filled with dough, and two large iron spoons. After placing the pan in a chair, they dip in their spoons and throw the dough on the ground calling, "Biddie, biddie, biddie," all the time. Such a flapping of wings, and cackling, and crowing as there is, when the hens, chickens, and roosters come running from every corner of the barn-yard after something to eat, and it is hard to tell which has the better time, the chickens or the children.

It happened one morning as they were feeding the chickens that Tommy said:

"I shouldn't like to have our little hen eaten up, would you, Dassie?"

"Hush, hush, Tommy, she might hear you," said Dassie, who had funny thoughts of her own about some things.

"And what if she should hear me?" asked Tommy.

"Oh! she might go away from here and live with other hens," said Dassie, looking very wise.

The little yellow hen kept turning her head first on one side, then on the other, looking at Tommy, and then at Dassie, with her tiny, bright eyes.

"I do believe she does hear," said Tommy, "she looks so sad."

Whether the little hen did hear or not, I do not know, but I *do* know that the very next day, when the children went out to give the hens their breakfast, the little yellow one was no where to be seen. They looked in every place they could think of, but could not find her, and now they were very sure that she had heard what they had been saying, and in tears they went to their mother and told her all about it.

"And do you think she heard us?" they both asked.

"Perhaps she may have *heard*," said their mother, smilling, "but I do not think she *knew* what you were saying," and this comforted the children very much, so that they began to hope she would come back again. But day after day passed away, and the little yellow hen did not make her appearance.

At last one bright morning to their great joy she came for her breakfast, as usual, with the other hens. Where she had been, they could not tell, but there she was, eating away as if nothing had happened. At dinner time she was there again, but she did not come for her supper, nor for her breakfast next morning, but she came again for her dinner.

"What can the little hen mean by behaving so badly?" asked Tommy.

"Let us watch her," said Dassie.

So they did, and noticed that as soon as she had eaten all she wanted, she went off in the direction of the hills. Off to the hills went Tommy and Dassie that very afternoon to find their little yellow hen. They took sticks and brushed away the old, dry leaves; they hunted among the under brush, but she was not there, and they went home no wiser than when they started.

The days went by, and the little yellow hen came and went just as she pleased, and now it was the day before Thanksgiving. All the hens and chickens were ready to be roasted for the dinner next day, all the pies and plum puddings were made, indeed, everything was ready, and Tommy and Dassie were so taken up with all these things that they did not think much about the little hen. However, the hens and chickens that remained must be fed, and the children went as usual to give them their supper, when, to their great surprise and delight, in walked the little yellow hen with,—well, what do you think?—with a brood of thirteen little yellow chickens, of course. Oh! how proud she did feel, and no wonder, for they were just the prettiest little chickens that ever a mother hen had, and she looked up at Tommy and Dassie as much as to say, "*This* is what I mean."

As for the children, they fairly screamed with delight, and, throwing down their spoons, ran into the house to tell their mother.

"They are *real gold* chickens," said Tommy, "and we will give them to grandpa and grandma for a wedding present."

They did so, and of all the presents that grandpa and grandma received the next day, they thought the prettiest one was Tommy's and Dassie's Thanksgiving chickens. Everybody else thought so too, and Tommy and Dassie are more fond than ever of their little yellow hen.

M. C. Schouler.

The Tree and the Vine.

A FABLE.

"Please help me up, just a little, where I can see," pleaded a harmless looking little vine, creeping up to a sapling of the forest.

"To be sure I will," said the generous young tree. "Come on."

"Beware!" whispered a neighboring oak, whose massive trunk had braved the storms of more than a century, and many of whose branches were larger than the whole sapling. "Beware! that vine is poisonous, and will do you harm."

"What, that little bit of vine!" replied the conceited, as well as generous, sapling. "Nonsense! I am strong enough to help twenty such vines as that, even if they were enemies, as you say, and not the pretty, innocent friends they are."

"Beware!" muttered the aged counsellor, "I have seen trees as conceited as yourself bitterly repent of doing just what you now propose to do."

"Fiddlesticks! You are behind the times, Mr. Oak. Why, I have withstood storms before under which your hundred-year old brothers have fallen, and to which you yourself have yielded great branches. Come on, Miss Vine, and take my arm."

The foolish sapling extended one of his lower branches to the vine, who tenderly clasped it. The old oak sighed and remained silent, while the sapling gleefully laughed, and, as he felt the touch of the vine. said:

"Ah, Miss Vine, you are a charming companion. You and I will show that lightning-scarred, gnarly old fogy of an oak that we were born in an age of progress."

"How good and clever you are!" murmured the vine, nestling closer to him.

She was a very loving vine. She hugged the young tree more and more closely, twined herself slowly about his body, spread out over his head, and in a few years had completely shrouded him with leaves, shutting off the bright sunshine, and breathing out a poisonous breath, so that, after some faint struggles to obtain warmth and food, the tree died a lingering, remorseful death.

An evil habit may at first appear harmless and pleasant, but let it once get hold upon you, and it will twine itself closely about you, shutting out all that is good and pure, until you smother to death in its poisonous atmosphere.—*Bright Side.*

Snow Fairies.

When the forests are dreary, the leaves drop down,
The valleys are silent, the meadows are brown:
When the days are gloomy and the wiuds blow cold,
And the sheep come home to the shelt'rlng fold:
Then the good snow fairies come out of the North,
Whit'ning and feezing the summer rain;
And they drop it down from the darkened sky,
Till the pure drifts cover each hill and plain.

They scatter it over the earth in stars,
Diamonds, and crosses, and crystal bars,—
The meadows are heaped with their magic sheaves,
The trees are draped with their spotless leaves.
Drop, drop! for their plumy flakes
Must bury the blossoms that lie asleep;
Violet, crow-foot, and adder's-tongue,—
Shelter them, cover them warm and deep.

They make the coasting for Rob and Will;
They freeze the pond by the ruined mill;
They waken the sleigh bells' rhyme and chime,
And fill the stockings at Christmas time;
They cheer and gladden the children's hearts,
As the bitter weather flies swiftly by,
Till the spring comes back, and the sunshine drifts
From the shadowless depths of the far-off sky.

They prison the river, they chain the rill.
They veil each desolate craig and hill;
They spin with wonderful warp and woof,
The icy fringe for the cottage roof.
But when the winters shall come no more.
No storms and no shadows our hearts may know:
May we be pure in the sight of God,
As the beautiful flakes of the spotless snow.

Little Sower.

The Stars.

Pretty stars,
Overhead,
Looking down
On my bed;
Can you be
God's kind eyes,
Watching me
From the skies?

Pretty stars.
Kind watch keep,
Over me,
While I sleep.
Watch me well,
Stars, I pray,
Till I wake
In bright day.

For the Myrtle.

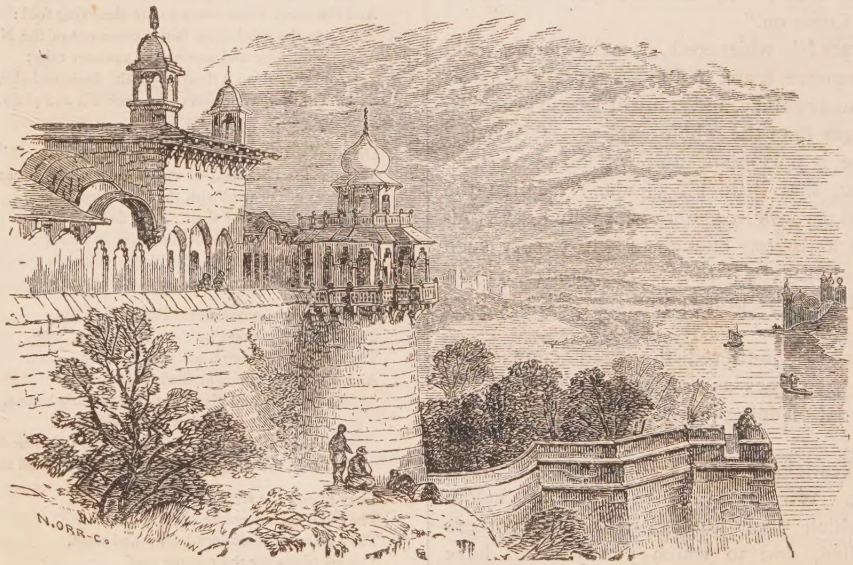
Castles.

IN the last book of Mr. Ruskin, the great art critic of England, he says, "I could not endure to live, even for two months, in a country so miserable as to possess no castles." It is clear that Mr. Ruskin would not be safe in coming to America, glad as we would be to see him.

But do our readers know how it happens that we have no castles in America? Some may answer it is because our country is not old enough, but there must be some reason besides age, for we have had time to build every other kind of edifice, as handsome and costly as castles, and that will last as long. We have great solid blocks, churches and cathedrals, mansions and villas, almost palaces, but nothing that we call castles. We will tell you why.

If you were sailing up the Rhine, you would notice that the fine ruins of the old castles that make its banks so picturesqe, are built on some high bluff, on the edge of some almost inaccessible crag, or just at some sharp bend in the river. If you stopped to visit any of them, you would find that they were built very strong, with massive walls and solid shutters and bolts. The tops were finished like forts, with parapets and every means of fighting from the upper towers and battlements. About them was often a solid wall, so high and strong that nothing could ge over or break through; and where they could be reached by land was always a moat, a deep wide ditch filled with water, crossed only by a drawbridge, and this was always drawn up at night. If any one wished to enter he must blow his bugle and be met by the warder of the castle who must learn who he was, and the nature of his errand, before he allowed him to enter.

And why was all this? Because the castles were built in what is known as the feudal age, when the country was ruled, such rule as it had, by the barons; each of whom was really king in his own neighborhood, made all pay tribute to him and extended his power as far as he could. Each had his retainers and squires to the number of scores or hundreds, and these sought to make their lords as powerful as possible. So the barons were always at war with one another and their castles were built more like forts than houses, to stand long sieges and to be defended bravely from within. Beneath them were great cellars for food and stores, vaults for treasures, and also one is made sad to find dark and gloomy dungeons for prisoners. All this shows what a warlike age it was when castles had to be built for homes.



We have thought while sailing on the upper Mississippi, or along the Hudson, how fine it would be to have those high bluffs crowned with castles to guard the river, as those fine old cas-

tles guarded the Rhine. But then we thought of the stormy and troublous times that produced them, and were glad that those days had forever gone by, and there was no necessity for the free people of America to live in castles, because every man is at war with his neighbor. We build castles in the air, perhaps. But we would not have any along our rivers and lakes, even for the sake of a visit from Mr. Ruskin.

H. A. B.

HUMILITY is the low but broad and deep foundation of every virtue.

Arranged for the Myrtle.

Tom and the Flies.

TOM sat at the parlor window
Watching the people go by:
But what was he really doing?
Why, plucking the legs from a fly.

Yes, there he sat in the sunshine,
Tormenting the tiny things;
First plucking the legs from their sockets,
And afterwards clipping their wings.

He didn't know that his father
Was standing behind his back,
Inclined very much to be giving
His cruel fingers a crack.

So catching his son of a sudden,
And giving his elbow a twist,
He pulled his ear till he holloed,
Then doubled him up with his fist.

And didn't he twist on the carpet,
And didn't he cry out with pain!
But whenever he cried "Oh, you hurt me!"
His father would punch him again.

"Why, Tom, how amazingly funny,
You don't seem to like it my boy;
And yet, when you try it on others,
You always are singing for joy.

Hush! hush, while I pull both your legs off,
And clip off the half of each arm;
What you practice yourself, sure in others
You can't think will do any harm.

Now Tommy, my boy," said his father,
"Will you leave these poor creatures alone?
If not, I'll go on with my lesson."
"I will," cried poor Tom with a groan.

And so he was broken forever
Of his thoughtless and cruel ways;
And instead of tormenting poor insects
He thought of himself in their place.

If 'twas only a fly in the water,
His fingers went quickly down;
"I'll help him and save him," says Tommy,
"For how would *I* like to drown?"

For the Myrtle.

Helping God.

A young woman was leading a little boy by the hand. The boy was gazing silently and intently at the red and gold and green of the sunset sky. After a while he said suddenly:

"Auntie, I think I should like to be a painter."

"Why?" returned his companion.

"Because then," answered the child, "I could help God to paint the sky."

That was a charming thought of the little boy. He did not say, "It would amuse me. It would please me to be able to paint." No, he thought "I could help God."

What do I hear you say, my sharp little reader? O, you say, "What a foolish little speech! How could a boy so small that he must be led by the hand help God? It is just as if a fly should light on the frame of a house, and say, 'See! I am going to help build this house.' I am sure a little boy can never help God!"

Dear young readers, you are mistaken! Be sure that God never awakens a holy aspiration in a child's heart, or a man's or woman's heart, that is altogether vain. And this aspiration of the little boy was a holy one. He loved God, and wished in the simplicity of his little heart to do something for him.

And he *could*, in his little way, help that great and good Being. Not by painting the sunset sky, that would be beyond the highest mortal; but perhaps he could paint the colors of joy in some little unfortunate being's breast. And so could you. You could give a piece of bread to the hungry. You could cover his little shivering limbs with one of your warm garments. You could speak kind words to him, and then you would see the joy coming into his face as bright, perhaps, as the sunset in the West.

Would it not be helping God, if you made one of his little ones happy?

Then you could by setting a good example; by always telling the truth; by being obedient and striving always to do right, help God to restrain others from evil, and lead them also to do good.

So little children, remember this. When you have put one touch of beauty into the gray life of the suffering and forlorn; awakened one good thought in the sinful, you have done something to help God. And He will accept the aid.

Never be discouraged, then, and say, "I am small and weak, I can do nothing for God!"

Mrs. C. M. Sawyer.

Come to Jesus.

Is there a little child in any home or Sunday School who has *not* "come to Jesns?"

Do you know who has asked you to come?

Not only the dear teacher who instructs you every Sunday, but the dear Saviour himself. He calls you his lambs, and has entreated you to come into his fold, and rest on his bosom.

A little pet, now asleep in Jesus, used to say, not only when in her Sunday School, but when playing with her mates, "I don't see how any one can help loving the Saviour."

Nor can we. The earlier you begin loving him the better.

The Sabbath.

A Sabbath well spent
Brings a week of content,
And strength for the toils of to-morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned,
Whatever is gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.

Sunday School Meetings.

MASSACHUSETTS.

An interesting Sunday School meeting was held at the State Convention in Springfield. Addresses were made by the Rev. W. A. Start, on "The Relation of the Sunday School to the growth of our church," Rev. C. W. Perry, on "The One Lesson System," and Mr. Henry B. Metcalf on "Method Subordinate to Spirit." The Centenary Sunday School Association presented a memorial, praying for some action which should give greater prominence and efficiency to the Sunday School work in the State. The meeting indicated the increasing interest in the work, and Bro. Perry's presentation of the one lesson method, was especially timely.

The Sabbath School Union of Boston and vicinity, held its twenty-first annual exercises at School Street Church, on Sunday evening. Nov. 6th. Address by Rev. Dr. Miner, on the "Qualification of the Sunday School Teacher." Singing by the children of the School.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

The Sunday Schools of New Hampshire had an interesting Convention at Portsmouth, Oct. 18th and 19th. Mr. J. M. Carr, Superintendent of the Portsmouth School was President, and Fenelon Foster of Weare, Secretary. The forenoon of the first day was occupied by reports and appointment of committees. In the afternoon the subject of Sunday School Concerts was discussed Some disadvantages were brought up, but on the whole the speakers agreed in favoring the concert. A good practical illustration was given in the evening by the Portsmouth school which gave a very interesting concert of singing, recitations, dialogues and the like.

The second day was given to the subject of Missionary Sunday School work. Strong desire was expressed that a State Missionary might be put into the field to establish Sunday Schools wherever opportunity could be found. Others thought this might be undertaken in connection with church work, and no action was taken. A resolution was passed asking for a general contribution for Suuday School work in April next. The friends of Sunday Schools in New Hampshire show by their earnestness that their heart is in the work, and it must prosper in such hands.

OHIO.

The Ohio Sunday School Convention was held Oct. 30th and 31st. It is reported in the *Star in the West*, as a most interesting occasion. The reports given the first day showed that over six hundred teachers and officers were engaged in our Ohio schools, and nearly thirty-five hundred pupils. It was proposed by the Secretary and adopted, that the Convention prepare some testimonial to be presented to the school showing the best average attendance, to the one presenting the best annual report, and to the school showing the greatest increase of numbers during the coming year.

A committee was appointed to prepare a series of questions embodying the doctrines of our church. These are to be published in the *Helper*.

Rev. Mr. Spaulding gave an address on the "Qualifications of Sunday School Teachers." These he thought were—intelligence, Christian character, a love for the work. He thought the teacher ought to prepare especially for the lesson, as much as the minister for his sermon. A discussion followed on the best method of *securing* qualified teachers,

In the evening a fine concert was given by the Mt. Gilead school. Afterwards, Rev. E. L. Rexford read an essay on "The Importance of the Sunday School Work," and Rev. Mr. Wilson made an address sn "What Constitutes a Good Superintendent." The points he made were, "He should be a man of prayer," this urged with great earnestness, "he should love the work; should be a man of intelligence and culture; should have aptness to teach; should love the children; should prepare himself for the work; should have the habit of promptness; and with all else should have good judgment, and good common sense."

The second morning an essay was read by Mrs. Danforth, on "The Ideal Sunday School," and Rev. Mr. Eaton addressed the meeting on "The conversion of children to Christ the great work of the Sunday School," and in the same line of thought, Rev. Mr. Canfield spoke on "Bible Classes." In the afternoon, Rev. Mr. Polk spoke on "Teachers' Meetings," urging their great importance.

Among the items of business we find a resolution adopted to take up a contribution in all the schools of the State for St. Paul's Sunday School, Chicago.

This Convention has the right ring, and shows that Ohio deserves the reputation of being the best Sunday School State in our order.

Love for the Bible.

Somebody sent a poor old blind soldier one of the Bibles printed for the blind. The letters in these Bibles are raised, and the blind read by feeling out their shape. This old soldier's fingers were stiff, the skin on the ends of them was hard, and he could not easily feel out the letters. What did he do? So anxious was he to read that he put blisters on the ends of his fingers to make them more tender! What a love for the Bible and for its precious truths he must have had! How few who can read their Bibles with clear eye-sight have as much love for it; how many who have such eye-sight care nothing about reading it. Young reader, remember this poor blind soldier.

Speaking at Concerts.

One fault with young speakers in our Sabbath School Concerts is, that they do not speak naturally. They speak in a kind of sing-song or unnatural tone. This is sometimes the case in speaking dialogues. We were pleased with the remark of one young Miss to another when they were rehearsing for a concert: "You speak your part, Mary, just as though you were talking it; *it sounds exactly like you.*" This is the true way to speak. Make your speaking sound exactly like yourself.

Wise Reply.

Stilpon was a heathen philosopher of the olden time. When his city was destroyed, and he escaped alone from the fire, being asked whether he had lost anything, replied: "All my treasures are with me; justice, virtue, temperance, and this inviolable principle, not to esteem anything as my proper good that can be ravished from me." A sensible reply. Few Christians could have given a better.

Who Wrote the Bible?

A Sabbath School teacher gave out this question to her class: "What proof have you that the Bible was written by good men?" A little girl six years old, replied: "Bad men would not have written so much against themselves."

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXIII.

JESUS GOES TO THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

"Lay it to heart to give glory."

SCRIPTURE, — John viii. 1–13. Luke ix. 52–56; xvii. 11–19.

Queetion. — What feast of the Jews was at hand?

Answer. — John vii. 2.

Q. — Where was Jesus at this time?

A. — John vii. 2.

NOTE. The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three yearly feasts of the Jews, and was instituted in memory of the journey through the desert. Therefore, during the days of the feast, the Jews went out of their houses and dwelt in tents or booths made of the branches of trees, as ther fathers did in their wanderings in the desert. Lev. xxiii. 42, 43. It was observed about the first of October. Lev. xxiii. 34–42; Deut. xvi. 13–15.

Q. — Who urged Jesus to go into Judea and work his miracles there?

A. — John vii. 3.

Q. — Why did they urge him to do this?

A. — John vii. 4.

Q. — What did Jesus reply?

A. — John vii. 6–8.

NOTE. Jesus would not improperly expose himself to his enemies, for the work of his life upon the earth was not done. His brethren could go to the feast at any time, for the Jews did not hate them.

Q. — Did Jesus go to the feast?

A. — John vii. 10.

Q. — Did the Jews expect him at the feast, and inquire for him?

A. John vii. 11.

Q. — Were the people divided in opinion respecting him?

A. — John vii. 12.

NOTE. It was necessary to pass through Samaria in going from Galilee to Jerusalem.

Q. — In what way did he journey?

A. — Luke ix. 52.

Q. — Why would not Samaritans give him entertainment?

A. — Luke ix. 53.

NOTE. The Samaritans and Jews did not deal with one another. They carried their exclusiveness so far as to refuse a drink of water to one another.

Q. — What did Jesus and John say to this refusal of the Samaritans?

A. — Luke ix. 54.

Q. — What did Jesus say to this question?

A. — Luke ix. 55, 56.

Q. — As he was entering a village, who met him?

A. — Luke xvii. 12.

Q. — What did these lepers do?

A. — Luke xvii. 12, 13.

NOTE. Lepers were not allowed to live in the villages. Lev. xiv. 45, 46. They were to raise the cry of "Unclean" to warn people not to come near them, for leprosy was a contagious and loathesome disease. In compliance with the law of Moses, they kept at a distance from Jesus and at the distance besought him to help them.

Q. — What did Jesus command them to do?

A. — Luke xvii. 14.

NOTE. For a full account of the Mosaic law respecting leprosy, see the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Lev.

Q. — Where were they healed?

A. — Luke xvii. 14.

Q. — Which one of them showed gratitude to Christ for his miracle?

A. — Luke xvii. 16.

Q. — Did the nine Jews show any gratitude?

A. — Luke xvii. 17, 18.

Answers.

Nov. 18. Levi; Sin; Rome; Simeon; Onin; Yours; Ur; Moses; Lemuel; Lois. Love your enemies.

Aaron's; Manna; Eliab; Nimrod. Amen.

THE MYRTLE

IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,

37 Cornhill, Boston.

BENTON SMITH, Agent.

TERMS—PAYMENT TO BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Single copy, or less than ten, **75** cents per year.

Ten or more copies sent in one package, *without names*, to one address, **50** cents each per year.

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

The printed date upon each wrapper will show each subscriber how the account stands, and none need expect it continued beyond the term paid for.

In any case where money has been sent, and the date has not been changed to correspond, we will be glad to be notified, and the mistake will be corrected.

Address "Universalist Publishing House,"
37 Cornhill, Boston, Mass.